



Doctrine and
Covenants 97:21





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SEEKING ZION AND THE LORD'S BLESSINGS

*Building Zion is a great responsibility, but it also
brings great rewards.*

THE FIRST great *truth* of heaven is that God *loves us* with all His heart, might, mind, and strength. He wants the very best for us—He always has, and He always will. He wants us to be happy; not temporarily or superficially happy but profoundly and eternally happy as He is. He wants us to grow and reach our divine potential as a son or daughter of God.

I know this isn't always easy. Many of you face hardships and personal trials that can sometimes be overwhelming. You have probably looked at your own circumstances, at some of the conditions in your family, or the problems among nations around the world, and wondered, "How can I make it through this maze of challenges?" One answer may surprise you: Seek to build up Zion.



Where Is Zion?

Down through history God has regularly called His people to establish Zion. That was usually a particular place where God's people could be free from the influences of the world and live in harmony with one another. But in this last great dispensation, Zion is not limited to one geographic location. In our day, Zion can be wherever a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is found. The Lord described these people of Zion as being "of one heart and one mind" (Moses 7:18) and "pure in heart" (Doctrine and Covenants 97:21). In short, we no longer think of Zion as *where* we are going to live but *how* we are going to live.

Many wonderful blessings are in store for you as you do your best to build Zion, to be who the Savior needs you to be, and to help prepare the way for His return to the earth. Such an effort takes work and tremendous faith, but it will also bring lasting happiness and joy. I hope you find this to be as moving and exciting as I do! As President Russell M. Nelson has taught, nothing—literally *nothing*—could be more important.¹ And we get to participate! We are the soldiers in the front lines of truth. We don't carry

bullets; we carry bandages! We are called on to help heal the world and provide a worldwide congregation of people to whom the Savior can come.

Love God and Neighbor

We can achieve this kind of family or neighborhood or nation by keeping the commandment to love. And the more we love God, the more we will love our neighbors and see ways we can bless them. There are neighbors to help, the poor to lift up, and good to do everywhere.

The Lord once described this responsibility and blessing this way:

"Wherefore, be faithful; . . . succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.

"And if thou art faithful unto the end thou shalt have a crown of immortality, and eternal life in the mansions which I have prepared in the house of my Father" (Doctrine and Covenants 81:5–6).

Stand Up for Truth

When God calls us to build up Zion, He calls us to stand up for His teachings and to stay firm in our faith. This won't always be easy or comfortable to do, but

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we must do it—with compassion, humility, understanding, and unfailing charity for others. In our quest to establish Zion, we will surely come across those who may not look or dress or behave appropriately. When we meet such people, we must be careful to respond *righteously*, not *self-righteously*. In such situations the best thing we can do is behave properly ourselves and show “love unfeigned” for them (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:41).

I want others to enjoy the blessings that I have, but sometimes I wonder how to share them in a way that won’t be offensive or misunderstood. This scripture has helped me through all of my Church callings and personal responsibilities as a disciple of Christ:

“Therefore, verily I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men;

“For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say.

“But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things.

“And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say” (Doctrine and Covenants 100:5–8).



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A Blessing Moving Forward

My beloved young friends, there will be challenging days ahead, but your life is ultimately going to be magnificent as you give your heart to God, love the Lord Jesus Christ, and do your best to live the gospel. If you are faithful, Zion will be wherever you are. I bless you to embrace it joyfully. The Lord has so much in store for you! 🙏

NOTE

1. See Russell M. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), 8, [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).